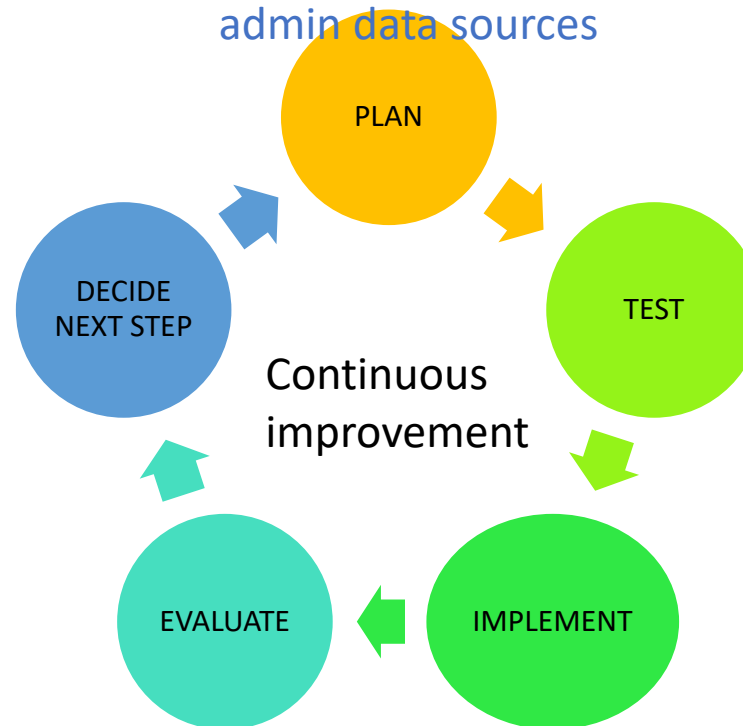# General recommendations for a smooth transition

UN Statistics Division

What does a smooth transition mean?

- ➢ Develop a long-term plan for the transition
  - o Road map for all partners involved in the transition process

- ➢ Develop a system for continuous monitoring and documenting
  - ➢ The progress in the transition
  - ➢ Strengthens and weaknesses
  - ➢ Risks and contingency plans

- ➢ Update the road map, when it is necessary, depending on lessons learned

Ensure a continuous improvement in the use of admin data sources

PLAN

TEST

DECIDE NEXT STEP

Continuous improvement

EVALUATE

IMPLEMENT

Recommendations -1

❑ NSO`s **long-term strategic vision** for a register-based statistical system, including population and housing census statistics
- An ambitious picture of the future that guides an NSO's strategy

Examples:
- ✓ Production of reliable annual statistics on population and its basic characteristics in two decades
- ✓ 70 percent cost reduction in the production of population and housing statistics in two decades
- ✓ Fully-register-based censuses in three decades

- United Nations **Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics concerns cost effectiveness** and suggests (at Principle 5) that

    "Data for statistical purposes may be drawn from all types of sources, be they statistical surveys or administrative records", taking due regard to quality, timeliness, costs and the burden on respondents

START IMMEDIATELY

Recommendations-2

❑ **Develop a road map** for the transition from the traditional census to other approaches in full accordance with national requirements and circumstances
  - ○ High-level programme containing main phases, objectives, partners, expected outcomes and milestones
    - • Will be shared with executive stakeholders

❑ **Develop a project plan** for the transition, focusing on upcoming census methodology
  - ○ Detailed project activities, tasks, responsible bodies/teams, timeline, risks and contingency plan

There is no one size of design that fits all countries

START IMMEDIATELY

Recommendations-3

❑ **Establish mechanisms for effective communication with internal and external stakeholders**

❑ Build knowledge on the use of administrative data for statistical purposes
  - High-level communication-Advisory Board/Steering Committee
  - Technical level communication –Working Groups/task teams

❑ **Achieve necessary pre-conditions**
  - Political and public support
    - Public and data users should understand why and how administrative data are being used for statistical purposes
  - Confidentiality of individual records
  - Legal framework
  - Institutional infrastructure and capacity

START IMMEDIATELY

COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

Recommendations-4

Source and Input data quality

❑ **Establish a good understanding of availability and quality of administrative data sources on population and building/dwellings at NSO**
  - Base registers- at least Population register, address or building/dwelling registers
  - Registers related to components of population change (births, deaths and internal/international migration)
  - Registers related to population and housing characteristics
  - Availability of unique identifiers
  - Administrative procedures to update registers
  - Quality of each register in terms of coverage and content

This may take more time than expected, usually several years

IMPORTANT – Start with Base Registers and gradually increase registers for quality assessment

START IMMEDIATELY

Recommendations-5

❑ The relationship between the NSO and the administrative data supplier should be supported by robust mechanisms of communication, such as
  ▪ written agreement for duties and needs of both parties

❑ There must be a legal basis for the supply and use of the data to help build the relationship and secure the data supply

❑ The NSO should develop feedback mechanisms to help the supplier better understand and, ultimately, improve the quality of administrative data

Between the NSO and register-holders, such as
- Ministry of Interior (population register, address register)
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Health ….

Recommendations-6

❑ The NSO should gain an **in-depth understanding** of the data source, since administrative data are not collected for the needs of the census

❑ The NSO should understand and **assess differences** between the required populations, concepts, definitions and time-related dimensions

❑ This will usually require **access to clear and comprehensive metadata** about the administrative source

❑ Assessment of the **coherence and comparability** of the administrative source, along with its limitations across the various quality dimensions, is essential

Recommendations-7

❑ **Identify administrative data sources that can be used for producing census data**

- NSO should
    - identify administrative data sources relevant to their census
    - Set out what the expected or required outcomes of each source

    ❖ This should include improvements to the efficiency of the existing census methodology, for example traditional census,
    - ✓ particularly in terms of reductions in cost and respondent burden;
    - ✓ improvements to the quality of the census; or
    - ✓ the delivery of new or enhanced census outputs

Recommendations-8

❏ **Allocate enough time for testing and correct or adjust methods, processes or systems used for the transition**

- The integration of administrative data sources into the census process should be preceded by adequately resourced feasibility research that provides a 'proof of concept'

- The NSO should carry out a number of test runs (using real data) well in advance of the main census to ensure any unforeseen issues are identified, allowing enough time to correct or adjust the methods, processes or systems

- A key objective for the NSO should be to at least prepare, if not publish, possible statistics based on administrative records as soon as taken from the population and other base registers

TESTED

Recommendations -9

❑ **The NSO should record and publish the results of any quality assessment and assurance of all stages throughout the census production**

- to enable producers and users of the census data to assess and provide appropriate feedback
- to ensure that users understand the strengths and limitations of the data
- to determine whether the right balance has been achieved across the dimensions of quality in order to inform the improvement of future censuses

Recommendations -10

❑ **Consider using administrative registers to support the traditional census before moving to a combined census**

- ▪ Administrative data can be used across the different phases of traditional census, including
  - **constructing an address frame**
  - **supporting field operations**
  - enumerating the population
  - collecting census variables
  - **quality assurance**
  - **editing and imputation**
  - **estimation**